UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1998/635
13 July 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 11 JULY 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I feel it necessary to draw your attention to the truth of the so-called submarine incident discussed in the letter of the Permanent Representative of south Korea, dated 2 July 1998, and its annexed statement on the "incident" contained in Security Council document S/1998/607.

As has been known, a submarine of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was wrecked after drifting because of mechanical trouble while on a training mission in the East Sea of Korea off the coastal area of Kosong on 22 June 1998.

Shortly after the wreckage, the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea made it public through the media and appealed for its rescue. The Government took the initiative by proposing the convocation of the General Officers meeting between the Korean People's Army and the International Allied Forces.

At the General Officers meeting on 23 June 1998, our side provided detailed information about the submarine having drifted into the high seas because of mechanical trouble while on a training mission and subsequently wrecked and strongly demanded that the submarine and its crew be returned.

The United States side responded to some of our demands by handing over the remains of the crew on 3 July 1998.

However, the south Korean authorities have brought this case, which was already discussed and resolved at the General Officers Talk, to the United Nations. This act on the part of south Korea was motivated by nothing but indecent political purposes.

The south Korean side claims that the submarine infiltrated their territorial waters. But, according to our investigation, the submarine was in the high seas, 12.7 miles offshore, when it got wrecked.

The south Korean side also alleges that the submarine was engaged in "espionage" by presenting outfits and weapons made in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from inside the submarine as "evidence".

However, those outfits and weapons themselves indicate that the submarine was on a training mission.

If the submarine were really on an "espionage" mission, as alleged by south Korea, it would have been equipped with outfits and weapons made by either south Korea or the United States.

The south Korean authorities can not avoid their responsibility for not rescuing the wrecked submarine, in violation of international law, and should return the submarine immediately.

I would appreciate if you could have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) LI Hyong Chol
Ambassador
Permanent Representative